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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of 47 members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 21 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations presents its compliments to Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and has the honour to request him to issue as a document of the General Assembly the pledge which the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is making in support of its candidacy in the election to the Human Rights Council to be held on 9 May 2006 (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 21 April 2006 from the Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela addressed to the Secretary-General

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the Human Rights Council

Voluntary pledges and commitments under General Assembly resolution 60/251

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela undertakes to:

1. *Cooperate with the Human Rights Council in order that it may develop into an effective, impartial body true to the real principles supporting human rights, by inter alia*:

- Continuing to encourage respect for the principles established in the United Nations Charter, especially in Article 1, paragraph 3, with a view to developing international cooperation in all the fields mentioned by this article, particularly as regards human rights;
- Ensuring observance of the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity in the review of human rights issues; and contributing to the establishment of an appropriate framework for the promotion of a constructive international dialogue which fosters cooperation with a view to promoting and protecting all human rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development;
- Contributing to the enhancement and rationalization of the Council's mandates, mechanisms and functions, while maintaining a system of special procedures, appropriate advisory and complaints procedures, with a view to the realization of all human rights and an effective response to human rights abuses wherever they may occur;
- Cooperating with an exhaustive review of the existing human rights special mechanisms, including an evaluation of the quality and objectivity of the reports submitted by such mechanisms, avoidance of duplication, and the imposition of rigorous conditions for the selection of persons who will make up such mechanisms;
- Pursuing the implementation of a policy aimed at considering the budgetary needs of bodies in charge of promoting human rights. With respect to voluntary donations, Venezuela has made several contributions to the promotion and protection of human rights at the international level, for example, to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations, and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

2. *Promote human rights at the international level, by inter alia*:

- Encouraging countries to strengthen their national human rights systems and establish the office of ombudsman where it does not exist, as fundamental steps for guaranteeing respect for protected human rights;

- Actively participating in debates on efforts to combat Racism and All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance and the promotion of hatred, by means of a constructive dialogue among States;

- Instituting negotiations for a prompt adoption of the United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the international convention on the protection of all persons from enforced or involuntary disappearances;

- Actively participating in the working group on the elaboration of an optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, with a view to its prompt adoption;

- Evaluating the possibility of a further protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child establishing a system of individual communications;

- Encouraging States to exchange experiences on the implementation of their human rights obligations, through solidarity and cooperation.

3. *Promote, protect and uphold human rights at the national level, by inter alia*:

- Pursuing public policies at all levels of the Government aimed at promoting and observing human rights, in accordance with the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela;

- Cooperating with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies by submitting reports to them in a timely fashion and acting in good faith on their observations and recommendations;

- Continuing to implement and enhance social programmes designed by the Government and aimed at the realization of the rights of the entire population in the fields of health, work, education, food, social welfare, scientific and technological progress, with particular attention to the most vulnerable sectors of the population, with a view to overcoming difficulties caused by social exclusion and poverty. In this regard, it is worth mentioning the approval with which the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization greeted the measures in Venezuela for the provision of primary and specialized health care, the results of the anti-hunger campaign, the programmes implemented in the field of food security, and the achievements in education following the declaration of the country as an illiteracy-free territory in 2005;

- Expediting consultations with the appropriate authorities in order to sign: the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, and Additional Protocol III to the Geneva Conventions.